

S. C. ROWELL

GOSSIPRED AND LITHUANIAN DYNASTIC  
POLITICS IN EARLY-FIFTEENTH-CENTURY  
POLAND

Phibi stellis constipatur, duobus natis recreatur,  
Wladislaus primus fatur, Kazimirus alter datur,  
summus parens collaudatur,  
pater Deo commendatur et inclita Zophia<sup>1</sup>

On 31 October 1424 Zofia Holszańska [Alšėniškytė], queen of Poland and supreme duchess of Lithuania gave birth to a son and heir, who was given the name of the renovator of the Polish Crown, Łokietek, and his father King-Supreme Duke Jogaila (Jagiello), Władysław. This joyous event, the birth of a male heir to a *reigning* Polish king, was the first of its kind in several hundred years, and it was celebrated by court intellectuals such as the astronomer Henryk Czech (who penned a birth chart for the future monarch), and the deputy Crown chancellor, Stanisław Ciołek (who composed a poem in Władysław's honour, *Cracovia civitas*); the court musician Mikołaj of Błonie composed an anthem in honour of the day: *Nitor inclite claretudinis*. Music for both these poems was composed by Mikołaj of Radom<sup>2</sup>. In St Stephen's Church in Cracow there still stands a handsome bronze font donated by the parish priest and court cleric of Queen Zofia, Stanisław Roj in 1425, which in its heraldic decoration expresses

<sup>1</sup> "Laus Cracoviae" – Teresa Michałowska, *Średniowiecze*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2008, pp. 678–685, here p. 684.

<sup>2</sup> Elżbieta Wojnowska, "Kras. 52' – europejski zabytek polskiej kultury muzycznej z I połowy XV wieku", in: *Biuletyn informacyjny Biblioteki Narodowej*, 2002, vol. 163, no. 4, pp. 40–44.

physically the status of the Jagiellonian dynasty at the time when the first male heir was born to the royal couple<sup>3</sup>.

With the birth of Władysław Jagiellończyk the political set up of Poland and Lithuania and the position of the Jagiellonian state in Europe changed radically. The aged monarch Władysław-Jogaila had been given support in his old age, *baculus senectuti*, as Pope Martin V reported happily to his friend, the king. The bishop of Rome would become one of the boy's many godfathers. One fifteenth-century formulary contains an incomplete list of 29 godfathers, while noting that "many have been omitted on account of their great number". In this article we will survey the circumstances surrounding the prince's baptism and consider the role the ceremony played in confirming the Jagiellonian hold on the Polish Crown with regard to domestic and foreign support. In effect Jogaila and his cousin Vytautas (Witold) made use of the sacrament of Baptism (as on other occasions, the sacrament of Marriage) to reinforce their political objectives.

Apart from poetry, music and astronomical charts, the sources we have for this event are many and diverse from letters appointing the godfathers' representatives and council records surviving in state (Vatican, Venetian and Polish) archives, copies of other documents extant in registers of the Polish Crown Archive (Kórnik 203) and various fifteenth-century Polish formularies (Stanisław Ciołek's *Liber Cancellariae*, once held in Königsberg, Kórnik 194, Czartoryski 1399,

<sup>3</sup> Piotr Rabiej, "Užmirštas paminklas: 1425 m. krikštykla Krokuvos šv. Stepono bažnyčioje", in: *Jogailos ir Vytauto laikai. Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys, skirtas Žalgirio mūšio 600-osioms metinėms*, eds. Zigmantas Kiaupa et. al., Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, 2011, pp. 170–186. See also Bożena Czwojdrak, *Zofia Holszańska. Studium o dworze i roli królowej w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2012, pp. 183–186. The coats of arms depicted around the font seem to be a reflection of contemporary dynastic piety as expressed in Jogaila's confirmation of an emolument for the collegiate church of Our Lady in Poznań, where he requires „unam missam pro peccatis nostris et nostrarum consortum illustrium, videlicet Hedwigis, Annae, Elisabeth et Zophiae ac filii Wladislai filiaeque Hedwigis necnon pro praeclaro principe fratre nostro domino Alexandro alias Withowdo ... ipsiusque consortibus“, *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. VIII: *Dokumenty z lat 1416–1425*, ed. Antoni Gąsiorowski, Tomasz Jasiński, Warsaw – Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1989, no. 1003, p. 315.

Prague University VI.A.7, and Biblioteka Jagiellońska 1961) to the chronicle of Jan Długosz, the bible of Polish history, which many a devil has learned to quote over the centuries.

The doyen of mediaeval Polish historical writing notes that on Quinquagesima or *Esto mihi* Sunday, 18 February 1425, three days before the beginning of Lent, Prince Władysław was baptised in the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow by Pope Martin V through the agency of the archbishop of Gniezno and primate of Poland, Wojciech Jastrzębiec<sup>4</sup>. It may be significant that Quinquagesima Sunday (1424) was also the day chosen eventually for the coronation of Jogaila's queen<sup>5</sup>. The celebrations continued for more than three weeks until the Wednesday after the Third Sunday in Lent (*Oculi mei*), when, noble guests departed, the king set out on his traditional Lenten progress around his realm.

Godparents have occasion, if they so choose, to create a serious spiritual relationship, gossipred or compaternity, between themselves and their godchild and also with the latter's physical parents. This connection also links the priest who administers the sacrament to the parents and godparents and in canon law these relationships are equal to those of blood-kinship<sup>6</sup>. The *compater* and the physical parent are the child's guardians. The term in modern Polish and Lithuanian (*kum, kumas*) as in English ('gossip') reflects at a somewhat less loftily spiritual level the familiarity of broader personal relationships. This relationship is well known among European Christians and from the early Middle Ages it was especially popular among Germanic (Frankish, Anglo-

<sup>4</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae, Liber undecimus, 1413–1430*, ed. Danuta Turkowska, Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 2000, pp. 209–210. Długosz gives a confused account of the ceremony, which he dates to 17 February; he credits the Poznań canon Mikołaj Starszy Głębocki with representing pope Martin V. This cleric who later became titular member of the households of both the pope and Cardinal Branda was a frequent envoy – Paweł Dembiński, *Poznańska kapituła katedralna schyłku wieków średnich. Studium prozopograficzne 1428–1500*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 2012, pp. 537–542.

<sup>5</sup> Bożena Czwojdrak, *Zofia...*, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Guido Alfani, *Fathers and godfathers. Spiritual kinship in early-modern Italy*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009, pp. 4, 21.

Saxon) rulers as a tool of international diplomacy<sup>7</sup>. The relationship is mentioned in a still pagan Lithuanian context for the first time in 1382, when Grand Duke Jogaila made a secret alliance with the Teutonic Order to seize his Uncle Kestutis' lands. A Teutonic knight, Gunther von Hohenstein duly reported the plot to his *compater*, Kęstutis. Hohenstein was godfather to Kęstutis' daughter, Danuta, duchess of Mazovia<sup>8</sup>.

Jogaila invited more than 30 leaders of Church and state to stand as godfather to his son and these are only the ones we know of by name. Although the Church taught that parents should select only one godfather or godmother for their child, this rule did not apply to the upper classes. In Venice some nobles would select twenty godparents and the Council of Basel lamented in 1432 that "in some provinces people rush around everywhere in search of a child to raise from the font"<sup>9</sup>. Such a decision was social and political as well as religious, whereby Jogaila sought to ensure support for his son and local and international recognition of his *natural* rights to the Polish Crown. On 28 December 1424 Pope Martin V's palace deputy chamberlain Cardinal Bishop Jean Alarnet de Brogny of Ostia reported to Jogaila that His Holiness had sent Giacomino Rossi as his representative to Władysław's baptism. The diplomat explained how via godparenthood "utriusque magestatis amor

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Charles-Edwards, "Alliances, godfathers, treaties and boundaries", in: *Kings, currency and alliances. History and coinage of southern England in the ninth century*, compiled by Mark A. S. Blackburn, David N. Dumville, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998, pp. 47–62. In 770 Pope Stephen III sought to improve relations with the Franks by becoming the godfather of Charlemagne's brother Carloman (unfortunately the latter died unexpectedly in 771 and the policy failed) – Joseph H. Lynch, *Christianizing kinship – ritual sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England*, Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1998, p. 138.

<sup>8</sup> S. C. Rowell, "Pious princesses or the daughters of Belial: pagan Lithuanian dynastic diplomacy 1279–1423", in: *Medieval Prosopography*, 1994, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 59–63.

<sup>9</sup> Gratian's Decree requires only one godparent – Guido Alfani, *Fathers and godfathers*, p. 21; Venetian trends – *ibid.*, p. 34; the Basel lament – *ibid.*, p. 24. That diocesan statutes did not apply to kings, see Urszula Borkowska, "Królewskie zaślubiny, narodziny i chrzest", in: *Imagines potestatis. Rytuały, symbole i konteksty fabularne władzy zwierzchniej. Polska X–XV w. (z przykładem czeskim i ruskim)*, ed. Jacek Banaszkiwicz, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii PAN, 1994, pp. 82 and 90–91 (no. 54).

antiquus virtute tanti vinculi transibit in robur individue caritatis”. Similarly the doge of Venice Francesco Foscari would claim in 1432 to report the treachery of another *compater*, Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg “zelo amicicie vestre et compaternitatis”<sup>10</sup>.

Jogaila invited the major figures of international affairs to act as godfathers, beginning at the top with Pope Martin V and Emperor Sigismund Luxemburg, king of Hungary. These two had shown great interest in the question of the Polish succession and supported Frederick of Brandenburg as the most suitable candidate to marry the hitherto sole heiress Jadwiga, daughter of Jogaila and his second wife, Anne of Cilly. It was in 1424 that negotiations over the Brandenburg marriage were reaching a deciding point. Neither pope nor emperor could take part in the Cracow christening personally and so appointed representatives in the figure of Wojciech Jastrzębiec, archbishop of Gniezno, and Clemens Moliari, bishop of Győr. Another Hungarian prelate, Bishop Thomas of Eger also became godfather to the baby prince<sup>11</sup>. Długosz leads us to believe that the bishops and secular lords who acted as proxies for absent western European prelates and other dignitaries were also godfathers to the prince in their own right<sup>12</sup>. From geographically closer lands Jogaila invited the grand master of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, Paul

<sup>10</sup> Anatol Lewicki, *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, (henceforth – *CEXV*), vol. II, Cracow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1891, no. 146, p. 183. Jean Alarmer de Brogny (1342–1426), bishop of Ostia, 1410 – 3 Dec. 1423 administrator of the archdiocese of Arles. Borkowska mistakenly regards him as *compater* (“Krolewskie zaślubiny...”, p. 91, in a reference to “Jan de Bronhiaco” and “Jan arcybp Arles”). The post of administrator was taken later by Louis d’Alleman – Conrad Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi*, vol. I, Munich: Sumptibus et typis librariae Regensbergianae, 1913, p. 104. Jean appears in discussions of the affairs of Polish dioceses but he enjoyed no closer relationship with the Jagiellonians. For Foscari, see below, no. 57.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas was bishop from 1421 until his death on 25 May 1425, whereupon Peter of Rozgony was appointed his successor – Conrad Eubel, *Hierarchia...*, vol. I, p. 98.

<sup>12</sup> “Aderant Regni Polonie prelati et proceres, qui infantem et eorum, quorum nomine advenerant, et proprio de fonte levarunt” – Jan Długosz, *Annales et cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 211–212. Of those mentioned on the list of *compatres* only one, Heinrich of Berzevici, was a layman.

von Rusdorf, who was represented by two diplomats experienced in the Order's relations with Poland-Lithuania, namely the Grand Commander and Grand Hospitaller. In their answers to the king thanking him for the great honour shown them, these rulers stress the future role the boy would play in the life of Poland and Christendom as a whole.

On 1 November 1424 Jogaila wrote to Martin V to inform the pontiff of his news of great joy, that a son and acknowledged heir had been born to him to support him in his old age, who with God's help would with the whole Church be faithful to the Holy See and take over the reins of government in his broad domains as lord and heir: 'regni terrarumque mearum gubernacula, que spatiosus complectitur ambitus, velud *heres et successor* feliciter in domino possidebit'<sup>13</sup>. The pope was asked to be godfather. During Christmas 1424 Martin expressed his joy at the birth of an heir, making use of the Christmas liturgy's texts from Isaiah to compare the Polish boy with Jesus Christ – *nobis natus, nobis datus*. In Cracow the same trope was employed when Mikołaj of Błonie adapted the popular Christmas hymn, *Nitore inclite claretudinis*, to compose a paean of praise to the young prince<sup>14</sup>. The pontiff prays that the boy will ensure the wellbeing of the kingdom after his father dies and learn his values while Jogaila still lives<sup>15</sup>. Martin agrees to be godfather and selects Archbishop Jastrzębiec or Bishop Andrzej of Poznań to stand in for him during the ceremony. On 25 December the pope also wrote to these two Polish prelates expressing his desire to baptise the boy and his inability to attend the festivities in person. He notes that the king will choose one of them as papal representative and asked them to order prayers for the boy's health and salvation in their diocesan churches<sup>16</sup>. In the end Jastrzębiec represented the pontiff,

<sup>13</sup> *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1376–1430*, (henceforth – *CEV*), ed. Antoni Prochaska, Cracow: Sumptibus Academiae Literarum Cracoviensis, 1882, no. 1169, p. 680 (from Kórnik, Ms 194, pp. 314–315).

<sup>14</sup> Teresa Michałowska, *Średniowiecze*, pp. 687–689.

<sup>15</sup> *CEV*, no. 1176, p. 685; *CEXV*, vol. II, no. 144, p. 181–182 (from a manuscript in the Vatican Secret Archive). At the same time curia officials also wrote to the king, see below, pp. 55–57.

<sup>16</sup> *CEXV*, vol. II, no. 143, p. 181.

while Andrzej Łaskarz participated in the ceremony in his own right<sup>17</sup>. Two more papal letters were issued on the same day dealing with this matter, addressed to Queen Zofia and Grand Duke Vytautas. He greets the young mother, using phrases from Isaiah's prophecy and sends the Genovese canon Giacomino Rossi to gather information about the little boy's condition. He pledges he will love and respect the queen for having borne a son to so many faithful peoples<sup>18</sup>. A similar letter was sent to the grand duke, thanking God for the birth of a son which means that after Jogaila and Vytautas die, so many peoples will not fear how they will live on. It is obvious that the pope understands how the two cousins rule Poland-Lithuania and that the dynasty's interests affect both men equally<sup>19</sup>. Rossi would stand as godfather to the prince himself and later obtain the post of papal collector in the Kingdom of Poland, as a result of which he was able to reimburse his expenses for the baptism mission, as we learn from the collector's accounts for the period 1426–1434<sup>20</sup>.

In February 1425, after the baptism, the king wrote to Martin to thank him for baptising his son through his proxy, Archbishop Jastrzębiec and to rejoice in their new connections through the sacrament of Baptism. He prays that God will help his son learn how to rule his

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix no. 2, p. 72; on Łaskarz, see Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, "Andrzej Łaskarz – 'patron' polskich koncyliarystów", in: *Ludzie – Kościół – Wierzenia. Studia z dziejów kultury i społeczeństwa Europy Środkowej (średniowiecze – wczesna epoka nowożytna)*, eds. Wojciech Iwańczak, Stefan K. Kuczyński, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2001, pp. 265–274.

<sup>18</sup> *CEV*, no. 1177, p. 686.

<sup>19</sup> *CEV*, no. 1179, p. 687 (regest); *Liber cancellariae Stanislai Ciołek. Ein Formelbuch der polnischen Königskanzlei aus der Zeit der husitischen Bewegung*, ed. Jacob Caro, (henceforth – *Liber cancellariae*), vol. I–II, Vienna: In Commission bei Karl Gerold's Sohn, 1871–1874; here vol. II, no. 25, p. 70 (full text).

<sup>20</sup> "Item exposui de anno millesimo CCCXXV, quando dominus Martinus papa quintus felicis recordacionis me misit ad regnum Polonie ad tenendum loco sue sanctitatis primum filium serenissimi domini Regis Polonie supra fontem baptismatis, in summa florenos trecentos auri..." – Marek D. Kowalski, "Rationes Iacobini de Rubeis, collectoris in Regno Poloniae (1426–1434)". *Rachunki Giacomina Rossiego, papieskiego kolektora generalnego w Polsce, z lat 1426–1434*", in: *Studia Źródłoznawcze*, 2011, vol. 49, p. 90. Despite the claim made here, Rossi was not the papal proxy, but the nuncio who attended the ceremony in his own capacity.

realms to which he is the true successor (*verus successor*)<sup>21</sup>. Throughout this whole affair Jogaila skilfully intertwines the interests of his dynasty, realms, the Church Universal and the international community in order to obtain broader recognition for the rights of his true heir.

The other Catholic overlord, Emperor Sigismund knew how to play international politics no less craftily than the Lithuanian pair. On 25 November 1424 he announced his intention to Vytautas of taking part personally in the baptism of the newborn heir to the Polish Crown, if he can, and appoint a representative if he cannot. Meanwhile the juvenile English king, Henry VI proposed summoning an ecumenical council<sup>22</sup>. During the second half of January 1425 Sigismund informed the king that he had received welcome news of the birth of his lawful heir (*fili vestri legitimi*) but unfortunately he was busy with the affairs of Christendom and the Church and would be unable to come to Cracow in person<sup>23</sup>. On 6 February, with less than a fortnight left until the baptism, Sigismund told Jogaila that he was unable to attend the celebrations but would send a plenipotentiary representative, the bishop of Győr, from whose diocesan capital, Eisenstadt (Kismarton) he was writing. He promised to respect the full responsibilities of godparenthood<sup>24</sup>. Another imperial representative and godfather, Heinrich of Berzevici, had taken part in negotiations on the planned marriage of Princess Jadwiga to Frederick of Brandenburg early in 1424<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> *CEV*, no. 1186, p. 691.

<sup>22</sup> *CEV*, no. 1174, p. 683 (regest); *Liber cancellarie...*, vol. I, no. 59, p. 104.

<sup>23</sup> *CEXV*, vol. I/1, eds. August Sokołowski, Józef Szujski, Cracow: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1876, no. 66, p. 64. On the embassy of Jan of Tuliszkowo, palatine of Kalisz, and Zawisza the Black, which was still ongoing on 19 Jan. 1425, see *Liber cancellariae...*, vol. I, no. 58, p. 102 and Beata Możejko, Sobiesław Szybkowski, Błażej Śliwiński, *Zawisza Czarny z Garbowa herbu Sulima*, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo WiM, 2003, pp. 91–92 (where reference is made wrongly to the baptism of Kazimierz rather than Władysław).

<sup>24</sup> *CEV*, no. 1184, pp. 689–690.

<sup>25</sup> Zenon Hubert Nowak, *Współpraca polityczna państw unii polsko-litewskiej i unii kalmarskiej w latach 1411–1425*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1996, pp. 71–72; cf. Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 202–203.



The Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Paul von Rusdorf wrote from Elbląg on 8 January 1425 to apologise that pressures of business would not permit him to travel to Cracow. He thanked the king for the honourable invitation to raise the royal couple's firstborn, the heir to the Kingdom of Poland from the baptismal waters ("filium ipsorum primogenitum ac ipsius Regni Polonie heredem inclitum") and so appointed Heinrich Holt, Grand Hospitaller, and Grand Commander Martin von Kemnate as his proxies<sup>26</sup>. Holt (formerly commander of Elbląg) and Kemnate (former commander of Toruń) were no newcomers to Polish-Lithuanian diplomacy. In 1422 they had represented the Order in negotiations over the Treaty of Melno and in March 1424 they were present at the coronation of Queen Zofia<sup>27</sup>. The grand commander was chosen to raise the boy from the font.

Four cardinals of the Roman Church, all of whom played important roles in the ecclesiastical politics of central and eastern Europe, stood as godfather to Prince Władysław, viz. Giordano Orsini<sup>28</sup>, represented by the ambitious bishop of Cracow, Zbygniew Oleśnicki; Branda da Castiglione, cardinal protector of Poland, represented perhaps by Bishop Jan Pella of Włocławek; Rinaldo Brancaccio, represented by Bishop Jakub of Płock; and Guillaume de Filiastre, dean of Rheims and cardinal-priest of St Mark's (in Rome, of course, not Venice). In 1421 the latter was appointed as negotiator by Martin V between Vytautas, Jogaila and the Teutonic Order. The cardinal reported on his commission to the pope in October 1423. A formulary preserved in the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow has a copy of Guillaume's reply to the king, where he asks Jogaila to receive his proxy (Jakub Paravicino) because bad health and problems with time and travelling mean that he cannot be present at the christening in person<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Kórnik, Ms 103, p. 114–116, see Appendix One.

<sup>27</sup> Adam Szweda, *Organizacja i technika dyplomacji polskiej w stosunkach z zakonem krzyżackim w Prusach w latach 1386–1434*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2009, pp. 261–262, 337, 383–387, 391–393, 395–397, 399, 402; for the coronation, see p. 61–63.

<sup>28</sup> Died in 1438; grand penitentiarius from 1419, papal legate to Hungary, the Empire and Bohemia in 1426 sent to deal with the Hussites.

<sup>29</sup> 1423 report – Anatol Lewicki, *Index actorum saeculi XV ad res publicas Poloniae spectantium*, Cracow: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum Cracoviensis, 1888, no. 1332,

Cardinal Orsini was the pope's expert in eastern European and Turkish policy. In a letter of 24 December 1424 to Jogaila the cardinal stresses that the boy is associated with the hopes nations have to live in eternal peace. The whole of Christendom, especially its bulwarks will have a new defender. The king's heir (*heres*) will protect Christians. Noting the king's respect for holy relics Orsini sends Jogaila parts of a nail by which Our Lord was crucified<sup>30</sup>. While it is clear that the gift was connected directly with the royal christening, Długosz writes about the matter separately as an event from June 1425, thereby disassociating it deliberately from its dynastic context<sup>31</sup>. On 10 January 1424 Orsini took part in Jogaila's libel prosecution against the Teutonic Order's satirist, Falkenberg<sup>32</sup>. Two years later Martin V appointed Orsini legate to encourage Jogaila, Vytautas and Emperor Sigismund to fight against the Hussites. His travelling companion on this occasion was the new papal collector, Giacomino Rossi<sup>33</sup>.

The Milan-born prelate Branda da Castiglione acted as cardinal protector of Poland from 1419<sup>34</sup>. He maintained close relations with

p. 155; invitation to baptism – *CEXV*, vol. II, no. 145, pp. 182–183. The rubric on p. 414 of the ms BJ 1961, has misled historians. The inscription *Gregorius cardinalis sancti Marci etc*, should read Guilelmus. Presumably because of the cardinal's title (priest of St Mark's in Rome) Prof. Borkowska refers to him as a Venetian prelate – “Królewskie zaślubiny”, p. 91, no. 56. Jakub was of Milanese extraction, a citizen of Cracow and faithful royal servant.

<sup>30</sup> *CEXV*, vol. II, no. 142, pp. 180–182.

<sup>31</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, p. 210, where he confuses Orsini (the Alban cardinal) with Jean de Brogny, bishop of Ostia. The reliquary is discussed in Maria Starnawska, *Świętych życie po życiu. Relikwie w kulturze religijnej na ziemiach polskich w średniowieczu*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2008, p. 328–329, where she mistakes the pope as donor and the cardinal as one who simply handed it over. In his letter Orsini notes how *he* had obtained the relic in the East.

<sup>32</sup> *Bullarium Poloniae*, eds. Stanisław Kuraś, Irena Sułkowska-Kurasiowa et al., vol. IV, Rome – Lublin: École Française de Rome, Instytut Historii Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1992, no. 1284, p. 234.

<sup>33</sup> 28 Jan. 1426 – *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae...*, (henceforth – *VMPL*), ed. Augustinus Theiner, vol. II, Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1861, no. 45, 46, pp. 32–33 (with the mistaken date of 17 July).

<sup>34</sup> Jan Drabina, “Dyplomatyczne służby papieża Marcina V wysłane do Polski w latach 1417–1431 i ich ranga”, in: *Ludzie – Kościół – Wierzenia...*, pp. 213–223.

the Polish king and delivered a sermon in his honour before the Council of Basel in 1434 after Jogaila's death. Branda discussed the case of Stanisław Ciołek with Vytautas in February 1428 and in correspondence the Lithuanian ruler referred to him as 'reverendissime pater, compater noster carissime'<sup>35</sup>.

The Neapolitan Cardinal Rinaldo Brancaccio chose as his proxy between Bishop Jakub of Płock and Bishop Jan III Pella of Włocławek (the former won the honour)<sup>36</sup>. He had long connections with Poland and obtained the provostship of Kruszwice in 1421. He held several benefices in the sees of Wrocław and Cracow between 1421 and 1427 and was a prelate of the Wawel cathedral<sup>37</sup>.

The rulers of two Italian city states active in Byzantine and south-east European affairs were also invited to the baptism. Like the cardinals, the doge of Venice Francesco Foscari and the duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti expressed their gratitude for this honour, which they could not take up in person, and sent representatives to the Wawel festivities. On 13 January 1425 the Venetian state scribe and notary David Jacopi de Tedaldinis reported how envoys from the Polish king had come to the city to announce the birth of a son and plans for his christening. The doge and his counsellors were informed of the king's desire for compaternity ('compaternitatis seu compatricji sacramentum'). The doge himself was unable to travel to Cracow, as we know from a letter in a Cracow formulary<sup>38</sup>. It may be that Foscari was represented

<sup>35</sup> Jan Drabina, *Kontakty papieżstwa z Polską 1378–1417 w latach wielkiej schizmy zachodniej*, Cracow: Zakład Wydawniczy "Nomos", 1993, p. 90; Jan Drabina, "Kardynał protektor Polski w czasach Władysława Jagiełły", in: *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 1982, vol. 89, pp. 665–673. Branda acted in the Curia as procurator of the affairs of several European rulers (Poland, England, Portugal, Milan) – *ibid.*, p. 668, no. 17. The cardinal's chaplain, Jan of Olomouc referred to Branda as "procurator regis Poloniae, cuius et compater fuit" – *ibid.*, p. 666. For Vytautas's letter, see no. 58.

<sup>36</sup> Letter dated 24 Dec. 1424 – Erazm Rykaczewski, *Inventarium omnium et singulorum privilegiorum, literarum, diplomatorum quaecumque in Archivo regni in arce Cracoviensi continentur*, Paris: Typis L. Martinet, 1862, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> Tomasz Graff, *Episkopat monarchii jagiellońskiej w dobie soborów powszechnych XV wieku*, Cracow: Societas Vistulana, 2008, pp. 169–170, no. 243; *Bullarium Poloniae*, vol. IV, no. 842, 907–908, 1087, 1988, 1992, 1995, 2004, 2012, 2070, 2083, 2091.

<sup>38</sup> De Tedaldinis, *Materiały do historii Jagiellonów z archiwów weneckich*, ed.

by the count of Astypalaia, Giovanni Querini, who requested (at a date unknown) a safe conduct to travel through Jagiellonian lands<sup>39</sup>.

Długosz informs us that the Visconti duke of Milan informed the king of his regret at being unable to attend the ceremony but agreed to send a proxy<sup>40</sup>. An undated letter from the Prague Formulary (Ms VI.A.7) reveals that sometime in the 1420s Jogaila sent a letter of thanks concerning a gift of hunting dogs from Lwów to Visconti which reflects close contacts between the two rulers. A. Prochaska dated it to 1423 but it may just as well come from 1424–1425<sup>41</sup>.

Many Polish bishops acted as proxies for the prince's foreign godfathers who were unable to journey to Cracow<sup>42</sup>. Many abbots, canons and clerics from in and around Cracow were also present such as the university rector (Jakub of Zaborów), the Crown chancellor (Jan Szafraniec) and his deputy (Stanisław Ciołek), and the so-called crowning abbots (of Tyniec (Benedictine), Mogiła (Cistercian) and Nowe Brzesko (Premonstratentian). M. Derwich writes that the choice of the latter as godfather reflects an almost magic view of the boy's

August Cieszkowski, (ser. *Roczniki Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk Poznańskiego*, 15), vol. I, Poznań, 1887, no. 24, p. 55–56; the doge's reply – *CEV*, no. 1178, pp. 686–687 (a text taken from Prague University ms VI); cf. Cracow, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, Ms 1399 in S. C. Rowell, "Fifteenth-century Poland-Lithuania in the light of an anonymous Kraków notebook", in: *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae*, 2003, vol. 8, p. 348, no. 60.

<sup>39</sup> It may be that the undated safe conduct to Giovanni Querini was issued by Jogaila in 1424–1425 – *CEV*, Appendix no. 39, pp. 1065–1066. This Venetian nobleman wished to visit Poland and Lithuania. Other texts from 1424–1425 (*CEV*, no. 1168, 1178) are included in the Prague formulary close to the Querini document. In general on the Querini, see Raymond-Joseph Loenertz, "Les Querini comtes d'Astypalée et seigneurs d'Amorgos 1413–1446–1557", in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 1964, vol. 30, pp. 385–397, and Danuta Quirini-Popławska, *Włoski handel czarnomorskimi niewolnikami w późnym średniowieczu*, Cracow: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych "Universitas", 2002, pp. 188, 192, 194, 196.

<sup>40</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, p. 207.

<sup>41</sup> *CEV*, appendix no. 21, p. 1050, taken from Prague university ms VI.A.7, p. 177.

<sup>42</sup> The archbishops of Gniezno and Lwów, the bishops of Kiev (a Lithuanian see), Płock, Poznań, Włocławek, Cracow; of the presence of a further seven bishops from Lithuania and eastern Poland we know nothing, although our ignorance may not signify their absence.

future; it may just be a direct link with the recognition of Władysław as heir to the Crown of Poland<sup>43</sup>. In 1426 these three ecclesiastical officials were familiar with Cracovian church politics. Together with Archdeacon Myszka and Dean Szafraniec the abbots of Tyniec, Mogiła and Miechów oversaw attempts to push forward the case for canonising Jadwiga of Anjou<sup>44</sup>. There is no harm in being the widower of a saint.

Mikołaj Pieniazek, named in the list of godfathers as provost of Cracow (an office he had held since 1413) was a famous Polish actor on the international ecclesiastical stage. He was mentioned as canon of Cracow for the first time in 1393 and was active in Rome from 1399; he was archpriest of Cracow (1394–1413) and papal tax collector general in Poland (1405). In 1424 he was given the honour of being papal chamberlain. He was also chancellor of the Gniezno Chapter (an office he resigned in 1403 in exchange for a canonry in Włocławek) and in 1413 witnessed Benedict Macra's verdict in Jogaila and Vytautas's dispute with the Teutonic Order<sup>45</sup>.

Andrzej Myszka (1370–1446) was archdeacon of Cracow from 1413 and official in 1419 and from 1423 onwards, when Zbygniew Oleśnicki became bishop he was appointed diocesan vicar general and supported the new bishop's policy against the Hussites. In July 1426 he became scholastic of Gniezno and canon of Cracow. In 1413 he had been chaplain and member of the household of Rainaldo Brancaccio, cardinal deacon of Ss Vitus and Modestus<sup>46</sup>. Mikołaj of Pniew or Wężyk

<sup>43</sup> Tomasz Michał Gronowski, "Rola polityczna opatów tynieckich w XIV wieku", in: *Klasztor w państwie średniowiecznym i nowożytnym*, eds. Marek Derwich, Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Wrocław – Opole – Warsaw: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2005, p. 247, citing Marek Derwich, "Rola opata w koronacjach królów polskich", in: *Imagines potestatis. Rytuały, symbole i konteksty fabularne władzy zwierzchniej. Polska X–XV w.*, ed. Jacek Banaszekiewicz, Warsaw: Instytut Historii Nauki PAN, 1994, pp. 31–58, esp. p. 42.

<sup>44</sup> Michał Jagosz, *Beatyfikacja i kanonizacja świętej Jadwigi królowej*, (ser. *Studia do dzieł Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, XV), Cracow, 2003, pp. 36–37.

<sup>45</sup> *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, (henceforth – *PSB*), vol. XXVI, 1981, pp. 101–102. He died in 1432.

<sup>46</sup> *PSB*, vol. XXII, 1977, pp. 264–266; Marta Czyżak, *Kapituła katedralna w Gnieźnie w świetle metryki z lat 1408–1448*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2003, p. 316.

was father provincial of the Polish Dominican province (1419–1431) who took part in the mission to baptise the Žemaitijans and also acted as the king's confessor; he may even have become Władysław's spiritual father<sup>47</sup>. Przedwój Grądzki (d. 1455) had been canon of Gniezno since 1412 and was cantor of Włocławek (hence the confusion on the list of godfathers which refers to him as cantor of Gniezno, an office held by Jan z Brzostkowa between ca. 1417 and 1460) and later canon of Poznań and Cracow<sup>48</sup>. He was a royal counsellor from around 1425. It is unclear who Nanker the provost of Schwerin [in Mecklenburg] or parish priest of Szkwierzyna [in western Poland] was<sup>49</sup>. It seems most probable that he came from the Mecklenburg diocese and was involved in diplomacy over Polish relations with Pomorze or the imperial campaign against the Hussites. Archbishop Jan Rzeszowski of Lwów, head of the second Catholic province in Poland-Lithuania, also attended the baptism in his own capacity and was accompanied in Cracow by his household<sup>50</sup>.

Churchmen could not give oaths as to their landholdings. Noblemen and burghers were tied to the young prince with oaths to be faithful to him and acknowledge him to be the true heir and in time, king.

The Crown chancellor (from 1423) and dean of Cracow, Jan Szafraniec (1363–1433), was a former rector of the University of Cracow and a faithful royal servant. In 1428 Jogaila would use his power to influence Jan's appointment as bishop of Włocławek<sup>51</sup>. His deputy,

<sup>47</sup> Grzegorz Głuch, "Dominikańscy spowiedniki i kaznodzieje Jagiellonów", in: *Dominikanie w środkowej Europie w XIII–XV wieku*, eds. Jerzy Kłoczowski, Jan Andrzej Spież, Poznań: "W drodze", 2002, p. 247 and no. 29.

<sup>48</sup> Mata Czyżak, *Kapituła katedralna...*, pp. 388–390 (Jan z Brzostowa, *ibid.*, pp. 334–335); Paweł Dembiński, *Poznańska kapituła katedralna...*, pp. 638–641.

<sup>49</sup> We do not know of a provost of Schwerin Cathedral named Nanker; similarly it seems that the parish priest of Szkwierzyna, a town which pledged its loyalty to the Jagiellonian succession in July 1425 (*Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. VIII, 1989, no. 1040, pp. 362–363) bore the name Mikołaj between 1417 and 1432.

<sup>50</sup> Janusz Kurtyka, "Senex ambulans: Arcybiskup Lwowski Jan Rzeszowski (1345/46–1436)", in: *Nasza Przyszłość*, 1992, vol. 77, pp. 80, 98.

<sup>51</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 229–230; Jan Szafraniec has been confused in the past with Jan Koniecpolski, chancellor, 1433–1455 – Urszula Borkowska, "Krolewskie zasłubiny...", p. 91, no. 56.

Stanisław Ciołek enjoyed the patronage of both Jogaila and Vytautas, who would support his candidature as bishop of Poznań in 1428<sup>52</sup>.

What remains particularly striking in Długosz's account of the christening and the incomplete list of godfathers surviving from a Crown Archive manuscript of the early sixteenth century is the absence of Lithuanians from the record (if we discount Bishop Michał Trestke O. P. of Kiev, a fervent supporter of Jagiellonian policy<sup>53</sup>). We do know, however, from Długosz that Vytautas gave the young prince a silver cradle weighing 100 marks<sup>54</sup>. Jogaila probably settled matters with the Lithuanians during the autumn and winter of 1424 when he was in the Grand Duchy. In 1401 and 1413 Lithuanian nobles (like their Polish brethren) had pledged to take one of Jogaila's children as ruler after the death of the king and his cousin. It was while he was in the Grand Duchy that the gossipred correspondence was begun.

Professor Jarosław Nikodem has noted the absence of Vytautas from both the coronation of Queen Zofia and the baptism of her first-born. He explains this truly strange phenomenon by some alleged conflict between Jogaila and Vytautas which is not mentioned in any extant source<sup>55</sup>. Without grounds he rejects the remarks of J. Sperka to the effect that the absence of Vytautas from Cracow during the queen's coronation allowed the king to avoid the necessity of giving a direct and unambiguous answer to the question of Princess Jadwiga's marriage. Jogaila explained to the emperor that he could not give a final answer because he had to consult Jadwiga's guardian (and godfather), Vytautas, and so imperial envoys

<sup>52</sup> Zofia Kowalska, *Stanisław Ciołek (+1437). Podkanclerzy królewski, biskup poznański, poeta dworski*, Cracow: Universitas, 1993.

<sup>53</sup> Tadeusz M. Trajdos, *Kościół katolicki na ziemiach ruskich Korony i Litwy za panowania Władysława Jagielly (1386–1434)*, Wrocław – Warsaw – Cracow – Gdańsk – Łódź: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1983, pp. 58–63. In 1427, probably during deliberations on the appointment of Stanisław Ciołek to Poznań, Michał granted an indulgence to Vilnius parish church – S. C. Rowell, “XV a. vyskupų atleidus raštai Vilniaus katedrai bei miestui: Tekstas ir kontekstas”, in: *Lietuvos pilys*, 2008, vol. 3.

<sup>54</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 209–210.

<sup>55</sup> Jarosław Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa wobec husyckich Czech w latach 1420–1433. Studium o polityce dynastycznej Władysława Jagielly i Witolda Kiejstutowicza*, Poznań: Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2004, pp. 310–313.

had to be despatched to Lithuania. This was a diplomatic manoeuvre by the long arm of Vilnius. We may also suppose that Vytautas's absence from the Polish capital on the occasion of a further Lithuanian dynastic victory (Vytautas's kinswoman was crowned queen and he was still guardian of the now unique no longer Polish heiress) at least did not rub Polish noses further out of joint. In a similar way when Władysław was christened he gave the boy a precious gift and was proclaimed the prince's guardian soon afterwards in the event of the king's death; he was to be regent of Poland along with the widowed queen. Can this be in line with an unattested "conflict" between the cousins? There is further indication that Vytautas was an absent godfather. When the question of Stanisław Ciołek's appointment to the see of Poznań, supported by the Polish and Lithuanian rulers since the autumn of 1426, came to the fore in February 1428 Vytautas corresponded with Cardinal Branda da Castiglione, referring to the cleric as his most beloved *compater*, a relationship they enjoyed only (so far as we can tell) via Władysław's baptism<sup>56</sup>. On 13 November 1432 the doge of Venice, Foscari, passed onto Jogaila letters of Sigismund which reveal the emperor's intrigues against Poland and his plans to make a truce with the Turks and leave the Wallachians to the Ottoman mercy. Foscari explains his action as the result of longterm good relations between Poland and Venice which were fostered by "the age-old law of our godparenthood" and the inspiration of Jogaila's friendship and compaternity<sup>57</sup>. However, we should not overestimate the power of the godparental bond, for Sigismund too was *compater* with Jogaila and Foscari.

In effect Władysław's baptism repeated or continued the festivities of Queen Zofia's coronation in March 1424. Several figures took part in both royal events such as Branda da Castiglione, Giuliano Cesarini, the envoys of the grand master of the Teutonic Order Heinrich Holt and Martin Kumnate. One matter discussed actively during the coronation

<sup>56</sup> 1426: *CEV*, no. 1241–1247, pp. 737–741. They sent letters on this topic to the pope and cardinals; 1428 – *Liber cancellarie*, vol. I, no. 122 B, p. 529 (regist – *CEV*, no. 1318, p. 792); no. 122 A, – Vytautas approaches Martin V on Ciołek's behalf. See Tomasz Graff, *Episkopat...*, pp. 173–178.

<sup>57</sup> *CEXV*, vol. II, no. 209, pp. 305–306.



celebrations was the proposed marriage of Princess Jadwiga to Frederick of Brandenburg sponsored by the pope, Branda, Sigismund, Rusdorf, King Eric of Denmark and others. It is worth noting that the metaphor used by the papal chancery with reference to this marriage, was the same that would be applied in December 1425 to the birth of Jogaila's son, *baculus senectutis*<sup>58</sup>. Another important policy issue under review was reaction to the threat posed by the Bohemian heretics.

Yet another pressing issue of the day was how to deal with the Turkish threat to Moldavia and Wallachia which drew the attention of Constantinople and the rival Polish, Lithuanian and Hungarian rulers. In October 1422 Martin V had asked the rulers of Venice, Genua, Milan and Hungary to provide military assistance to Emperor Manuel II in his struggle against the Turk, and fostered plans for an ecumenical council to reunite the eastern and western Churches<sup>59</sup>. The following March the pope asked Venice to speed to the defence of the Byzantine capital. Finally in spring 1424 the junior emperor of Byzantium, John VIII Palaiologos, whose first wife, Anne (1414–1417) was Vytautas's granddaughter, visited western European capitals urging the Venetians and Milanese to make peace with Emperor Sigismund so that an international expedition might be launched to attack Sultan Murad<sup>60</sup>. In November 1424 shortly after Władysław's birth Sigismund reported to Vytautas that there was still time to send information to the Reichstag summoned in Vienna concerning negotiations with Murad<sup>61</sup>. That same year Martin V had

<sup>58</sup> 28 May 1424: "providisse quieti senectutis tue et statui filie tue ac paci perpetue Regni tui", – *Bullarium Poloniae*, vol. IV, no. 1374–1376 and Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 197, 202.

<sup>59</sup> Kenneth Meyer Setton, *The papacy and the Levant, 1204–1571*, vol. 1: *The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries*, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1976, p. 42, and no. 9; Raymond-Joseph Loenertz, "Les dominicains byzantins Théodore et André Chrysobergès et les négociations pour l'union des Eglises grèque et latine de 1415 à 1430", in: *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 1939, vol. 9, pp. 5–61.

<sup>60</sup> John W. Barker, *Manuel II Paleologus (1391–1425): A study in late Byzantine statesmanship*, New Brunswick – New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1969, pp. 369–379.

<sup>61</sup> Johann Friedrich Böhmer, *Regesta imperii XI: Regesten Kaiser Sigismunds (1410–1437)*, (henceforth – *RI XI*), ed. Wilhelm Altmann, vol. 1–2, Innsbruck: Verlag

praised Vytautas for his attempts to overcome the Turks. In 1424–1425 Sigismund waged war on the Venetians (“the foes of Hungary and the Empire”) and the Milanese<sup>62</sup>. Bearing in mind the important affairs involving Poland and Lithuania with Byzantium, Hungary and the Italian city states in the period 1422–1425 it is hardly surprising to find the head of these states invited to stand by the Jagiellonian prince’s font. Some time in 1425 Vytautas wrote to Sigismund on the state of affairs in Moldavia and northern Italy, mentioning his trade relations with the Byzantine emperor and the Turks, a field strongly influenced by the Venetians, Genoese and the Milanese<sup>63</sup>.

In comparison with other Jagiellonian christenings the 1425 event established a traditional form for such ceremonies. The baptism took place in the Wawel Cathedral. Under extraordinary circumstances, such as plague or the queen’s absence from Cracow, the ritual might take place elsewhere. Games were associated with the festivities and victorious knights were awarded special prizes. Gifts were given to those who attended the ceremony, especially the representatives of foreign powers. Władysław’s baptism stands out in certain ways. The period between birth and baptism was much longer (three months) than usual (one month or even a couple of days). This was the first time in centuries that a male heir was born to a reigning king of Poland; time was required to select many suitable godparents and organise a truly grand ceremony. We know of almost thirty godfathers and the list remains incomplete. On the Kórnik list there are no Polish magnates and no Lithuanians. We know none of Jogaila’s third son, Kazimierz Andrzej’s godfathers and only two of his *compadres* (from Długosz). The choices made in 1424–1425 appear to be deliberate ones, while the godfather chosen for the young boy’s nephew, Frederyk Jagiellończyk in 1468, namely the

der Wagner’schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1896–1900, here vol. 1, no. 6016 cf. *CEV*, no. 1174, p. 683 (regest) and *Liber cancellariae...*, vol. I, no. 59, p. 104.

<sup>62</sup> Martin to Vytautas, 10 Apr. 1424 – *VMPL*, vol. II, no. 38, p. 29; Hungary and Italy – *RI XI*, vol. 1, no. 5928 (9 Aug. 1424), 5938 (17 Aug. 1424); vol. 2, no. 6244 (26 March 1425), 6251 (29 March 1425), 6265 (9 Apr. 1425), 6273–6276 (9–10 Apr. 1425). 12 May 1425 Sigismund offered peace to Venice – no. 6287.

<sup>63</sup> *Liber cancellariae...*, vol. I, no. 90, p. 103.

bishop of Olomouc, seems to be coincidental; the prelate just happened to be in Cracow when the baptism took place rather than having been invited specifically for the occasion.

Having settled compaternal relationships on the international stage and within the royal entourage in Cracow (including courtiers, Crown servants and politically significant clergy) Jogaila set off to enlist recognition for his heir's rights from noblemen, and city communities. Following the baptism ceremonies the king set out on his traditional progress around his realm (the previous autumn he had gone on progress around the Grand Duchy) with the aim of celebrating Easter in Kalisz. En route he collected pledges from townsmen to recognise Władysław's rights as heir to the Polish Crown, sometimes reciprocating with a confirmation of burgher charters. En route was the sejm town of Brześć Kujawski, where congregated nobles and the inhabitants of larger towns swore that after the king died, they would recognise his son as their rightful king. From Długosz onwards Polish historians have attempted to explain in all manner of ingenious ways why all these pledges were invalid. Even after Lewicki eventually found the original manuscript of the charter drafted for this sejm, it has remained axiomatic that the Jagiellonians did not enjoy any natural rights to the Polish Crown<sup>64</sup>. After Brześć Jogaila continued his progress and it is notable that the charters he confirmed *after* the sejm contain a further qualification, namely that the guardians of the prince and Poland after the king's death would be the royal mother, Zofia, and the royal uncle, Vytautas. These opportune charters worked a double effect at least. They widened the ranged of royal subjects who recognised publicly the rights of the young Jagiellonian and in return confirmed the rights of burghers. These burgher rights did not however extend to a right to elect a Polish king. What burghers were important for was moral and financial support for the dynasty and its ambitions. The participation of the Vilnius burgher Hanul in negotiations of Jogaila's acceptance of the Polish Crown and its queen may have been intended to have a similar effect. In 1434 representatives

<sup>64</sup> Anatol Lewicki, "Ze studyów archiwalnych. II. Przywilej Brzeski", in: *Rozprawy i sprawozdania z posiedzeń Wydziału historyczno-filozoficznego Akademii Umiejętności*, 1889, vol. 24, pp. 186–246.

of 23 Polish towns took part in Władysław III's coronation and obtained a promise that when he came into his majority the young king would renew their charters. This pledge too is opportune, a gift offered during the coronation festivities. This time representatives of the more important towns visited the new ruler as part of coronation tradition; nine years earlier the ruler visited towns according to a different royal custom, the progress. The fact that twelve towns appear in both ceremonies is surely a mere coincidence, and splitting the towns into four distinct categories represents an over-subtle analysis of coincidental data<sup>65</sup>.

While Jogaila sought to assure public recognition for his son's rights to the Polish Crown at home and abroad in a traditionally Jagiellonian belt and braces policy, there were those who sought equally stubbornly to undermine his dynasty's position at the head of the Polish polity. It is remarkable that all four of the king's marriages were subjected to black propaganda and evil gossip (in the modern, not the ancient canonical sense). Queen Jadwiga was said to have had carnal knowledge of her first betrothed, Wilhelm Habsburg, thereby consummating her relationship with the Austrian and making her marriage to Jogaila bigamous. Rumours spread of the infidelity of Anne of Cilly, whilst merry was made of the age and multiple marital history of Queen Elisabeth Granowska. It comes as no surprise that Jogaila's paternity in the birth of the youthful Zofia Holszańska's sons (especially the third born, Kazimierz Andrzej) was subject to public doubt. This court tittle-tattle still feeds the history-writing business, as it has since Długosz's day<sup>66</sup>. The accusations made against the fidelity of the young queen in 1427 work in at least three ways, viz. they present the queen as a whore and the king as an old fool; they undermine the rights of the dynasty to reign in both Poland and Lithuania (for it had no Gediminid, let alone Jagiellonian roots); and

<sup>65</sup> Bożena Nowak and Henryk Samsonowicz argue differently – Bożena Nowak, "Postawa miast Korony wobec planów sukcesyjnych Władysława Jagiełły", in: *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska, Sectio F*, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 77–89, esp. pp. 80–82, 86–88.

<sup>66</sup> Jerzy Besala, *Tajemnicze dzieje Polski. Wątki magiczne i tragiczne o naszym pochodzeniu, naszych patronach i spiskach, które czyhały Polskę*, Warsaw: Bellona, 2014, pp. 55–69. A more sobre account is provided in Bożena Czwojdrak, *Zofia...*, pp. 26–34.

they undermine the Jagiellonian court, for one of those accused of lying with Zofia was Jan, the son of the master of the Queen's Kitchens and future tutor of the Jagiellonian princes, Jakub Koniecpolski. The latter was rewarded for his services in 1428 by the sejm with the town of Lelów and 400 grywni<sup>67</sup>. In 1430 the grand master of Prussia, Rusdorf, heard gossip spreading among the leaders of the Teutonic Order to the effect that the sons (plural) of the king of Poland were *nicht rechte, etliche kinder*<sup>68</sup>.

In sum the birth of a male heir to Jogaila in autumn 1424 saved the new dynasty from the unfortunate fate of the Angevin line in Poland. To celebrate this blessing, a curse for Poland's enemies to the west, the king invited the pope (as per tradition, judging from the case of his first daughter, Bonifacja) and emperor to stand as godfather to the baby prince and *compater* to himself along with other important diplomatic partners such as the grand master of Prussia, the doge of Venice, the duke of Milan and leading cardinals of the Roman Church active in eastern and central European diplomacy. These men were represented at the ceremony by proxies selected from among the archbishops and bishops of Poland-Lithuania. Leading Malopolskan monastic lords (the three 'crowning abbots') and Cracovian clerics also took part in the ceremonies. Among the more than thirty godfathers we know by name none were laymen, except for foreign heads of state and the emperor's nuncio. No Polish secular lords, not even Piast dukes, courtiers or royal counsellors, were invited to raise the new heir from the font. None, apart from possibly Bishop Trestke of Kiev and probably Grand Duke Vytautas, hailed from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. None were female. It seems that Jogaila deliberately refused Polish secular lords the chance to form a closer personal relationship with the Jagiellonian dynasty and played down the Lithuanian nature of the dynastic triumph (a son born to Lithuanian parents during whose minority guardianship of the heir and his rightful inheritance would be entrusted to his mother and second cousin). In correspondence regarding the ceremony itself, Jogaila and his *compatres* stress the messianic status of the boy and

<sup>67</sup> *PSB*, vol. XIII, 1967–1968, pp. 516–517.

<sup>68</sup> *CEV*, no. 1397, 1416.

acknowledge his legitimate rights to inherit the Crown of Poland. The status of the flourishing dynasty was celebrated in literature, music and art by court poets, musicians and servants. By the time Queen Zofia had been delivered of a second son and during her pregnancy with the third, the Jagiellonian hold on Poland was ensured and Poland's foreign enemies, chiefly the emperor and the grand master were eager to hear and spread rumours concerning the legitimacy of the princes. Gossip, like marriage, could be used to create alliance but it could also, like wedlock, prove to be a fickle basis for maintaining political advantages. As for Vytautas, having at first squashed such rumours, the Lithuanian ruler seems to have changed policy during his arguments with Jogaila over a grand-ducal crown (an ambition fostered deliberately by Emperor Sigismund), and become a less enthusiastic proponent of the Jagiellonian dynastic solution to the Lithuanian and Polish succession(s).

## APPENDIX

### 1

#### 1425, January 8, Elbląg

*Paul von Rusdorff, grand master of the Teutonic Order sends solemn emissaries plenipotentiary to raise the first-born son of King Jogaila-Władysław II of Poland and do all that is required by the bond of gossibred (compaternity)*

A: Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie, Perg. 83;  
B: Kórnik, Ms 103, pp. 114–116.

**Paulus Magister Prussie generalis mittit nuncios solennes cum potestate plenaria ad levandum de sacro fonte primogenitum Wladislai Regis Polonie filii aliaque omnia faciendum, que compaternitatis vinculum requirunt ||**

Nos Frater Paulus de Rusdorff<sup>1</sup> ordinis Beate Marie Theutonicorum Ierosolimitanorum magister generalis Notum facimus tenore presentium universis etc Quamvis Serenissimus princeps et dominus noster dominus Wladislaus<sup>2</sup> Dei gratia Rex Polonie etc necnon illustrissima nostra domina Zophia<sup>3</sup> eiusdem domini Regis conthoralis et Regni Polonie regina dignissima per suum solennem et specialem nuncium nos ad compaternitatis amicitiam, videlicet ad levandum et suscipiendum de sacro fonte novam prolem et filium ipsorum primogenitum ac ipsius Regni Polonie heredem inclitum ex specialis gratie benevolencia invitaverint et requisiverint, et quamquam nos huiusmodi iocundi gaudy nuncium et pie amicitie vocacionem cum omni, qua debuimus, humilitate et reverencia ac summo cordis gaudio susceperimus. Nosque

<sup>1</sup> Grand Master of the Teutonic order in Prussia, Paul von Rusdorf.

<sup>2</sup> Władysław-Jogaila, king of Poland, Supreme Duke of Lithuania.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Zofia Holszańska, fourth wife of Jogaila, affine of Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania.

parato animo ad parendum votis regiis summis erimus ut decebat. Multiplicibus tamen et legitimis impedimentis et causis quottidie occurrentibus hoc ipsum in propria persona iuxta merum nostri desiderii non potuimus nec possumus commode deducere ad effectum. Unde tam celebri ac Regie inquisitioni et exhortacioni quantum est in nobis parere volentes de consilio et || et assensu venerabilium comreceptorum nostrorum melioribus modo via quibus melius et efficacius possumus et debemus foverimus, constituimus et solenniter ordinavimus nostros veros legitimos indubitatos procuratores et nuncios speciales, videlicet venerabiles et religiosos fraters ordinis nostri Martinum Kyrmpnater<sup>4</sup> magnum commendatorem presentem et Henricum Hold<sup>5</sup> supremum hospitalarem eiusdem nostri ordinis et quemlibet eorum in solidum, dando eisdem nostris nunciis et cuilibet eorum plenam et omnimodam potestatem ac mandatum speciale ad contrahendum nomine nostro compaternitatis amicabile fedus cum prefato serenissimo domino nostro Wladislao Regi Polonie etc necnon illustrissima domina nostra Zophia Regina Polonie ad levandum et suscipiendum de lavacro sacri fontis novam ac dignam prolem videlicet filium ipsorum primogenitum Regnique Polonie heredem generosum necnon omnia et singula faciendum, que huiusmodi iocunde amicicie et compaternitatis vinculum iuxta sancte matris ecclesie ritum conaruntur quovismodo.

In quorum omnium fidem et testimonium presentes literas et sigilli nostri appensione fecimus communiri. Datum in Elbing, anno Domini millesimoquadringentesimo vicesgesimoquinto, die octava mensis Januarii.

## 2

### **Undated, fifteenth century**

*List of the compatres (gossips) of King Władysław II of Poland on the occasion of the baptism of his first-born son and heir, Prince Władysław (III Warneńczyk)*

<sup>4</sup> Grand Commander of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, Martin Kemnate.

<sup>5</sup> Grand Hospitaller of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, Heinrich Holt.



B: Kórnik, Ms 194 (previously: N II 68), f. 155 [p. 308]; E: *CEV*, no. 1184 p. 690, no. 1. This text follows on from a copy of Emperor Sigismund's letter relating to compaternity – *mandatum regis Hungarie in facto compaternitatis* (f. 154v – *CEV*, no. 1184) and two folios before royal correspondence with Pope Martin V *de nativitate filii* – f. 157v–159 (*CEV*, no. 1169, 1176, 1177, 1186). This codex contains the Brześć texts from the king and his subjects concerning recognition of Władysław as rightful heir to the Polish Crown (f. 184–185 and 31 respectively). In the left-hand margin of f. 155 the head of a bearded man is depicted upside-down; inscription beneath the text: *Maria mater gratie etc.*<sup>1</sup>; running horse with a flowing mane.

Reg. Jerzy Zathej, *Katalog rękopisów średniowiecznych Biblioteki Kórnickiej*, Wrocław – Warsaw – Cracow: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1963, pp. 349–410, esp. p. 386.

**Hy sunt compatres serenissimi principis domini Wladislai regis Polonie, phalabogu Amen.**

In primis sanctissimus dominus Martinus papa quintus per procuratorem dominum Albertum archiepiscopum Gneznensem et primatem<sup>2</sup>.

Item serenissimus dominus Sigismundus Romanorum rex semper augustus ac Hungarie, Bohemie, Dalmacie, Croacie etc per procuratorem dominum Clementem episcopum Jawriensem<sup>3</sup>.

Item dominus .. cardinalis de Ursinis per procuratorem Sbigneum episcopum Cracoviensem<sup>4</sup>.

Item dominus .. cardinalis Sancte Marci per procuratorem dominum Jacobum de Paraweszino<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Reference to a verse from hymn, *Memento, salutis Auctor – Maria, mater gratie, / Mater misericordie, / tu me ab hoste protégé / et hora mortis suscipe* – from the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Martin V, represented by Archbishop Wojciech Jastrzębiec of Gniezno.

<sup>3</sup> Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg, represented by Bishop Klement Molnari of Győr.

<sup>4</sup> Cardinal Giordano Ursini, represented by Bp Zbygniew Oleśnicki.

<sup>5</sup> Cardinal priest of St Mark's, Guillaume de Filiastre, dean of Rheims, whose proxy was Jakub of Paraweszyno.

Item dominus .. cardinalis de Brancancys per procuratorem dominum Jacobum episcopum Plocensem<sup>6</sup>.

Item magister generalis de Prussia Cruciferorum per commendatorem magnum ordinis sui<sup>7</sup>.

Item reverendus pater dominus Johannes archiepiscopus Leopoliensis per se<sup>8</sup>.

Item dominus Andreas episcopus Poznaniensis per se<sup>9</sup>.

Item dominus Thomas episcopus Agriensis per se<sup>10</sup>.\*

Item dominus Michael episcopus Kyowiensis per se<sup>11</sup>.

Item dominus Jacobinus de Rubeis, sanctissimi domini nostri pape nuncius per se<sup>12</sup>.

#### *Second column*

Item dominus Henricus, serenissimi domini regis Romanorum etc nuncius per se<sup>13</sup>.

Item dominus Nicolaus electus Mechoviensis per se<sup>14</sup>.

Item dominus Johannes decanus Cracoviensis, Regni Polonie cancellarius per se<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Cardinal Rinaldo Bracancio, represented by Bishop Jakub of Płock.

<sup>7</sup> Grand Master Paul von Rusdorf O.T., whose proxy was Grand Commander Martin Kemnate – see Appendix 1.

<sup>8</sup> Jan Rzeszowski, archbishop of Lwów.

<sup>9</sup> Andrzej Łaskarz, bishop of Poznań, considered as a possible proxy for the pontiff.

<sup>10</sup> Bishop Thomas of Eger.

\* In a different hand: *Ave Maria gracia plena*.

<sup>11</sup> Michał Trestke O.P., bishop of Kiev.

<sup>12</sup> Giacomino Rossi, papal nuncio, later papal collector in Poland.

<sup>13</sup> Imperial envoy Henrik Berzevici, the knight who represented Sigismund in 1424 negotiations over the marriage of Princess Jadwiga – Zenon Hubert Nowak, *Współpraca...*, pp. 71–72; cf. Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI, pp. 202–203.

<sup>14</sup> Most likely Mikolaj z Kazimierza, provost, abbot elect of the Miechów House of the Canons regular of the Holy Sepulchre – his appointment was confirmed in 1426 by Patriarch Hugo of Jerusalem: Ryszard Skrzyniarz, “Źródła archiwalne w Polsce do dziejów Zakonu Bożogrobców”, in: *Bożogrobcy w Polsce. Praca*, Miechów – Warsaw: Pax; Miechowskie Towarzystwo 1163 roku, 1999, p. 209.

<sup>15</sup> Jan Szafraniec, dean of Cracow, since 1423 chancellor of the Crown.

Item dominus Stanislaus Czolek cantor Cracoviensis, Regni Polonie vicecancellarius per se<sup>16</sup>.

Item dominus .. abbas Thinicensis per se<sup>17</sup>.

Item dominus Nicolaus abbas Magilnensis per se<sup>18</sup>.

Item dominus abbas Brzezensis per se<sup>19</sup>.

Item dominus Nankerus prepositus Szwerzinensis per se<sup>20</sup>.

Item dominus Nicolaus provincialis ordinis fratrum predicatorum per se<sup>21</sup>.

Item dominus Nicolaus Pyenąnszek prepositus Cracoviensis per se<sup>22</sup>.

Item dominus Andreas Myska archidiaconus Cracoviensis per se<sup>23</sup>.

Item dominus Grandsky cantor Gneznensis per se.<sup>24</sup>

Item dominus Jacobus de Zaborowo decretorum doctor tunc rector universitatis studii Cracoviensis per se<sup>25</sup>.

Et alii multi<sup>26</sup>, sed propter prolixitatem scribere sunt ommissi.

<sup>16</sup> Stanisław Ciołek.

<sup>17</sup> Stanisław Rozkoszka, abbot of Tyniec Benedictine Abbey.

<sup>18</sup> Mikołaj abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Mogilno.

<sup>19</sup> Mikołaj z Buska, abbot of the Praemonstratentian (Norbertine) convent in Nowe Brzesko (Hebdomów) 1420–1452 – Stanisław Kuraś, “Katalog opatów klasztoru premonstratorskiego w Brzesku – Hebdomowie 1179–1732”, in: *Nasza Przeszłość*, 1959, vol. 9, p. 46.

<sup>20</sup> Nanker provost of the Schwerin cathedral chapter (post 1420).

<sup>21</sup> Mikołaj Wężyk, father provincial of the Polish Dominicans.

<sup>22</sup> Mikołaj Pieniążek, provost of Cracow.

<sup>23</sup> Andrzej Myszka, archdeacon of Cracow.

<sup>24</sup> Przedwój Grądzki, cantor of Włocławek, canon of Gniezno, canon of Poznań – Jan Ignacy Korytkowski, *Prałaci i kanonicy katedry katedralnej gnieźnieńskiej od roku 1000 aż do dni naszych*, vol. II, Gniezno, 1883, pp. 124–129; Paweł Dembiński, *Poznańska kapituła...*, pp. 638–641.

<sup>25</sup> Jakub z Zaborowa, five-times rector of Cracow University, doctor of laws.

<sup>26</sup> Of the many names omitted from this list and known from other contemporary sources we may cite: Grand Duke Vytautas, Fosculari, the Venetian doge, the Visconti Duke of Milan, Cardinal Branda.

3

Table of Fifteenth-Century Polish Royal Baptisms

| Child              | Birthday   | Baptism                                | Baptised by   | Godparents  | Source        |
|--------------------|------------|--|---|---|---------------|
| Elżbieta-Bonifacja | 1399-06-22 | 1399-06-22                             | Bp Piotr Wysz of Cracow                                     | Boniface IX   | Dlug. 231     |
| Jadwiga            | 1408-04-08 | 1408-05-08                             | Bp Piotr Wysz of Cracow; feast lasted several days          | Gregory XII, who commanded 2 Polish bpps to baptise the girl in July 1408 | Dlug. 23      |
| Władysław          | 1424-10-31 | 1425-02                                |   |   |               |
| Kazimierz          | 1426-05-16 | 1426-06-02                             | Knightly games, prizes                                      |   | Dlug. 220–221 |
| Kazimierz Andrzej  | 1427-11-30 | 1427-12-21                             | Bp Z. Oleśnicki in Wawel                                    |   | Dlug. 228–229 |
| Władysław          | 1456-03-01 | 1456-04-04                             | Bp Tomasz of Cracow   |   | Dlug. 250–251 |
| Jadwiga            | 1457-09-21 |  |   |   | Dlug. 286     |
| Kazimierz (St.)    | 1458-10-03 | 1458-11-05, after return of king to C. | Bp Tomasz of Cracow   |   | Dlug. 311     |
| Jan Olbracht       | 1459-12-27 | 1459-12-30                             | Bp Jerzy OFM of Laodocia, suffragan bp of Cracow, in Cracow |   | Dlug. 338–339 |
| Aleksander         | 1461-08-05 |  | Jan Pnowski, archdeacon of Cracow                           |   | Dlug. 359     |

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|               |            |                                  |   |                          |               |
|---------------|------------|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| Zofia         | 1464-05-06 | 1464-06-14 games, prizes awarded | Bp of Cracow  |                          | Dlug. 82      |
| Elżbieta (I)  | 1465-06-09 | 1465-06-16                       | 2 bishops in presence of several dukes                    |                          | Dlug. 110     |
| Zygmunt       | 1467-01-01 | 1467                             | Bp Jan of Cracow at Kozincze in presence of many lords    |                          | Dlug. 178     |
| Fryderyk      | 1468-04-27 | 1468-05-08                       | Bp Jan of Cracow  | Bp Prostadius of Olomouc | Dlug. 210–211 |
| Elżbieta (II) | 1472-05-13 | 1472                             | Bp Jan Rzeszkowski of Cracow                              |                          | Dlug.         |
| Anna          | 1476-03-12 |                                  | Bp Wincenty Kielbasa of Chelmno in Nieszowo parish church |                          | Dlug. 373     |
| Barbara       | 1478-07-15 |                                  | Bp Jan of Cracow in Sandomierz                            |                          | Dlug. 416     |

Source: Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae...*, vol. XI.